

# Reaching the Goal: An Intercultural Communication Analysis of the “Social Profitability” of the FIFA World Cup

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**Reaching the Goal: An Intercultural Communication Analysis of the  
“Social Profitability” of the FIFA World Cup**

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**A Senior Honors Thesis Submitted to the  
Department of Communication  
of Boston College**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the various ways in which cultures across the world have used the game of soccer, or football, as a cultural unifier. With minimal equipment and simple rules, football is universally understood and globally popular. The uniting and inspiring power of football reaches its peak every four years during the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) World Cup. The tournament pits 32 of the world's best national football teams against one another in a dramatic and wildly popular contest that declares one team the World Champion.

Despite the competition on the field of play, the bidding process to win the privilege to host the FIFA World Cup is equally intense. Nations across the world vie for the chance to host one of the world's biggest and most prestigious sporting events, seemingly in the hopes of boosting the nation's economy. Scholarly research, however, claims that hosting a World Cup has a negligible, and sometimes even negative, effect on the host nation. Why, then, do nations bid so fiercely to host the World Cup? This thesis posits that the host nation is not primarily concerned with earning money, but with accruing "social profitability" from hosting the tournament. The intangible benefits to hosting the World Cup include situating the nation as a world class destination for business, trade, and travel. Further, hosting the World Cup gives the host nation the chance to showcase its unique culture to the world, while fostering peace, unity, and fair play across the globe in celebration of "the beautiful game," football.

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*To my family, especially my parents,  
for their continued support of my education  
and my undying love of sports*

*Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination.*

**Nelson Mandela**

## CHAPTER ONE: WHY THE WORLD LOVES FOOTBALL

### The Uniting Force of Football

There are few things that can capture worldwide attention quite like international football competitions, and the FIFA World Cup reigns supreme among them. Football is the world's game and the World Cup is indeed "the only truly international sporting event on the planet" (Wilsey, 2006). Although the Olympic Games have historical clout, their "overwhelming clutter of boutique athletics" tends to favor certain countries across the world (Wilsey, 2006). Football, on the other hand, is one of the most simplistic sports of modern times; virtually anyone can join "the beautiful game." Whether it is played by professionals on perfectly manicured fields or barefoot on a dusty lot, football is a universally understood language. That language, as it turns out, can be persuasive in breaking down barriers and creating intercultural communication.

Football is globally popular and powerful because of its universality and simplicity. If baseball is America's pastime, then football is surely the world's pastime (Carlin, 2010). The primary reason for football's prominence is how easily accessible it is; the game is open anywhere and to anyone (Carlin, 2010). Players can practice and play football anywhere, from grassy fields to stony ground or paved blacktops (Carlin, 2010). The rules are simple and the required equipment is minimal (Carlin, 2010). Football is also popular because, in a certain way, it is democratic. In international competition, players range from tall to small, black, white, or brown, and come from countries from every corner of the planet (Carlin, 2010).

The global popularity of the beautiful game may also lie in its likeness to humanity's two obsessions: money and religion (2006). As *National Geographic's* Sean



Wilsey writes, professional club soccer mirrors capitalism at its competitive best and ruthlessly greedy worst:

Club soccer (like capitalism) is basically the childlike desire to make dreams come true, no matter what the cost, realized by men with enough money to combine such commodities as the best Brazilian attacker, Dutch midfielders, British defender, and German goalie and turn them loose on whatever the other billionaires can put together – an unfair situation that describes much of the world these days. (2006)

Watching the world's best football players clash as members of wildly rich and storied clubs is a thrill to the fans across the globe that can rarely be matched.

Although the lust for money parallels the competitive desire inherent in all sports, football also mirrors religion in many ways. Governed by its simple rules or “laws,” football is a provider of hope and the occasional miracle (Wilsey, 2006). Like many of the world's religions, soccer's laws preach the basic importance of nonviolence and equality (Wilsey, 2006). On the world stage, the best players quickly become international sensations. They are “emblems of national prestige, filling the roles great generals or kings occupied in ancient times” (Carlin, 2010). As Stephen Tomkins, author of *A Short History of Christianity*, says, “Players are gods, the stands are the pews, football is the new religion” (Carlin, 2010).

In the unique arena of World Cup play, the religious undertones of football truly come alive (Wilsey, 2006). The convergence of teams from around the world on the host nation resembles “an unarmed, athletic crusade” in which the host nation attempts to fight off its foreign challengers (Wilsey, 2006). For the World Cup host, home-field advantage

takes on new meaning, as host teams often perform even better than predicted on paper, trouncing stronger opponents as if God were indeed on their side (Wilsey, 2006).

Furthermore, although football has caused its share of violence and mischief, it has also proven to be an effective facilitator of peace (Wilsey, 2006). In 2002, Japan and South Korea put their history of conflict aside to co-host the World Cup less than fifty years after a time when South Korea refused to even allow the Japanese cross its borders for a World Cup qualifying match (Wilsey, 2006).

The unifying force of football stretches far beyond the Asian continent, as evidenced by the recent success of the 2010 Gulf Cup in Yemen. The old port city of Aden, Yemen hardly seems fit to host an international football tournament. Yet it played host to hundreds of thousands of fans who came to watch the clash between teams from eight Persian Gulf states (Worth, 2010). While Kuwait won the tournament 1-0 over Saudi Arabia, many have said that it was Yemen that scored the biggest victory when the two-week tournament finished without a single terrorist attack (Worth, 2010). As the crowd gathered for the final match, a loud voice called from the loudspeaker, “What was broken is fixed! Our people, with strength in unity! (Worth, 2010).

The tournament, which ended as a celebration of the uniting force of football, began as an effort by the Yemeni government “to change the country’s image as an insurgent battleground and wellspring of terrorist plots ...” (Worth, 2010). One Kuwaiti photographer decided to write his will before coming to the tournament, but left singing the praises of beautiful Yemen (Worth, 2010). Although the tournament was a public relations victory, it was not without its costs. Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh spent months lobbying Arab leaders to send their teams to the tournament (Worth, 2010).

Further, Yemeni officials spent \$600 million on the event and employed 30,000 police officers and soldiers to keep the tournament venues secure (Worth, 2010). The government also built twelve new hotels and renovated over one hundred others to host the half million fans who thronged Aden for the Gulf Cup (Worth, 2010).

Rather than risk half-full stadiums, the government bussed tourists to the matches, for which tickets were free (Worth, 2010). Despite the fact that half the Yemeni population lives on \$2 or less, the wild spending seems to have been worth it, so long as Yemen can begin to repair its violent image (Worth, 2010). This tournament was also partially an effort to heal the rift between Northern and Southern Yemen, which were separate countries until 1990 and fought a civil war in 1994 (Worth, 2010). Six field hospitals were put in place, police dogs checked for explosives, and military helicopters and armed guards patrolled the Aden area in the constant effort to keep the event safe and secure (Worth, 2010). Of course, the peaceful cooperativeness that occurred in Yemen may not be permanent just yet. While the Gulf Cup has not exactly turned Aden into the Garden of Eden, it has fostered a certain sense of peace. As one fan commented, “The games are great! This isn’t about politics. We are all Arabs!” (Worth, 2010).

### **Roadmap to the Paper**

The purpose of this paper is to examine the unifying power of international football balanced against the massive profits generated by the FIFA World Cup. There are numerous accounts of the ways in which football fans across the world have used the beautiful game as a universal language. There is also scholarly research indicating that, although hosting the World Cup is often seen as an economic boon for the host country,

there is inconclusive evidence regarding how much of that profit trickles down to the host nation. Adding to the existing scholarly research, this paper seeks to understand the exact benefits, either economic or cultural, to investing massive funds to host the World Cup.

The rest of Chapter One will explain what is to come, as well as the methodology for the paper. Chapter Two will be a review of scholarly research on three theories to help frame why the world loves football. First is the concept of sport as a “third culture” that different cultures can share and experience together. The theory stems from the work of Benjamin Broome. The second theory is that of cultural identity, as defined by Stuart Hall. The third and final theoretical concept is sport as narrative, which seeks to explain how fans connect to athletics through the age-old practice of storytelling.

Following the scholarly perspective, Chapter Three will offer a contemporary and mass audience perspective on why football is popular across the world. This perspective includes narratives about an imprisoned Nelson Mandela seeking refuge in football, the unique tradition of the football jersey exchange, and the amazing narratives of two titans of international football, Sameul Eto’o and Didier Drogba.

Chapter Four will offer a brief history of Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the international governing body of football. The chapter will also discuss the evolution of international football in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter 5 will discuss the history and progress of the world’s biggest sporting event, the FIFA World Cup.

Chapter Six will discuss the economics of hosting a World Cup. Many politicians and citizens around the world believe that hosting the World Cup would generate massive profits. The research, however, is inconclusive. Some scholars believe that hosting the World Cup can even have a negative effect on the host economy. Finally, Chapter 7 will

explore the heart of the matter, the “social profitability” of hosting the World Cup. With the economic profitability of hosting the World Cup in question, World Cup hosts must look to more intangible benefits such as fostering social cohesion, fair play, and peace.

### **Discussion of Methodology**

In order to complete this study, I utilized content analysis on a number of books, newspaper and magazine articles, and other cultural texts such as popular music, poetry, art, and film. I used Boston College library resources, including several books, as well as online databases such as *World Economics*. Due to the cutting edge nature of this topic, I also needed to use newspapers and magazines such as *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, and *Time*. I was most interested in sources that are the most valid and reliable. Therefore, I have relied on sources in the following order: books, journals, newspapers, magazines, and Internet sources. This research topic is quite recent, and as a result, many of these sources have been published in the last five years. Research is still underway on this topic.

To find useful and relevant journal articles and studies, I have used several keywords in my search. My keywords included: FIFA, World Cup, South Africa, third culture, cultural identity theory, and sport as narrative. Using these keywords, I found various articles and points of view on the cultural significance of international football as a cultural unifier, the costs and benefits of hosting a World Cup, and how nations bid to host the World Cup in the name of national pride and prestige despite the questionable economic gains. After reviewing some initial sources, I broke down my research into three categories: how soccer is used as a cultural unifier, the history of FIFA and the

FIFA World Cup, and a venture analysis of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. The venture analysis includes discussions of the economic impact of hosting the World Cup as well as the less tangible cultural benefits felt by the host.

Using the cultural significance and uniting power of international football as a starting point, I am using this research analysis to understand how and why countries seek out the unique burden of hosting a World Cup. I explore how the costs and benefits seem to get thrown aside in favor of less tangible gains like national pride and prestige. My goal is to demonstrate that the host nation is not primarily concerned with the money. Rather, the host nation uses the World Cup as a venue through which it can maximize the uniting power of football to showcase their beautiful nation, bolster a sense of peace and fair play across the world, and create a one-of-a-kind fan experience. By doing so, the host shows that all football fans are interconnected, if only for a fleeting moment, by “World Cup fever” and the third culture it creates.

## **CHAPTER TWO: PAST SCHOLARSHIP DEALING WITH SPORT AND CULTURE**

In the past, scholars have paid particular attention to the ways in which athletics and culture intersect. Specifically, different cultures may use the common language of sport as a bridge between them, creating what some scholars have called a “third culture” of shared meaning. Scholars have also discussed the various ways in which a society constructs its cultural identity. Sport is most certainly a common experience in many cultures, making it a primary vehicle through which cultural identities are shaped. Finally, cultures expressed themselves and related to each other through the ages through storytelling. Due to its salience across many cultures, sport can become part of cultural narratives in nations across the globe.

### **Sport as “Third Culture”**

In intercultural communication literature, the concept of the “third culture” arises from uncertainty reduction theory. Developed by Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese, uncertainty reduction theory states that when strangers meet, their primary goal is to reduce uncertainty and increase predictability in the new relationship (Neuliep, 2009). Most reduction occurs in the relationship’s initial stages (Neuliep, 2009). One of the most important factors in developing a relationship is empathy, which is of the utmost importance for developing intercultural relationships (Neuliep, 2009). Regardless of language barriers, persons of different cultures often find it difficult to form relationships because of a lack of empathy (Neuliep, 2009).

Sport, however, serves as a common thread and source of empathy across cultures. Benjamin Broome based his model of relational empathy on the idea that when two people interact, they create a third culture of shared meaning (Neuliep, 2009). As James W. Neuliep writes, “This third culture of relational empathy and shared meaning is the outcome or harmonization of communication in which unique values, beliefs, norms, and symbols are shared by the interactants” (2009, p. 303). Furthermore, the third culture can only develop when interactants are willing to communicate openly (Neuliep, 2009). Through open communication in the relationship, even people of different cultures can create interdependent meaning. When they do so, the cultural influences and worldviews of each side meld into one shared meaning in the third culture (Neuliep, 2009).

Various scholars have discussed the third culture concept in different ways, and sometimes under different names. As Suman (2003) describes, Broome’s relational empathy approach mirrors Hans-Georg Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons” concept. Gadamer’s concept states that it is impossible for people of different backgrounds to completely remove themselves from their background, history and culture. Broome’s words in Neulip (2009) mirror that fusion: “While we can never become another person, it is possible to erect a structure within the framework of which the other’s interpretation of the world or us takes shape or assumes meaning” (p. 303). In the case of international football, the beautiful game itself is this framework. Football becomes the third culture through which people of different cultures can express themselves, communicate with one another, and ultimately, understanding one another.



### **Cultural Identity Theory**

In the international football scene, star players and championship teams are deified, immortalized, and enter the culture's folklore. Football, for many nations, is a way of establishing and perpetuating a "cultural identity." Stuart Hall (1993) discusses a two-fold way of thinking about cultural identity. First, we may define cultural identity "in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self,' hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves,' which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common (p. 223). Cultural identities, therefore, reflect a common historical experience and shared meanings that establish the true meaning of a culture. To ground the theory in football, for example, the U.S. national team in the 2010 FIFA World Cup became known for using a come-from-behind, hard-working attitude on the football pitch in an attempt to defeat the world's best teams. This embodies the traditional American worldview characterized by the Horatio Alger story of the rags-to-riches American Dream.

In Hall's (1993) second view of cultural identity, however, he states that members of a culture are continually renegotiating their place within that culture. In other words, they create cultural identity constantly. As Hall (1993) writes, "Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'"(p.225). He continues:

Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found,

and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past. (p. 225)

In this sense, one may begin to see the cultural significance of hosting international football competitions. By hosting a tournament like the World Cup, a nation can first and foremost establish itself within history as one of the few that have been fortunate enough to host this prestigious event. The desire to host a World Cup, however, is more than just a matter of pride and ego. It is the desire to help foster the evolution of the host nation's culture, both at home and in the eyes of the entire world. A host nation has the opportunity to showcase its abilities for establishing community, collaboration, fair play, and peace. Few other events offer such a grand stage on which to showcase not only the grandeur of a nation's heritage, but its lofty goals for becoming an ambassador or a beacon for peace in the future.

### **Sport as Narrative**

Throughout history, culture has been passed down through generations by storytelling as part of the oral tradition. Today, narrative remains an integral part of any culture because humans relate to one another through the sharing of stories. In his 1992 book, *Fields in Vision: Television Sport and Cultural Transformation*, Garry Whannel writes that "television sport involves the introduction of potential stars ... and the establishment of audience identification with their successes and failures (p. 122). Through the common narrative of sports legends and heroic matches, generations upon generations of a given culture can relate to one another because of the power of narrative.

Cultures establish identity through vicarious experiences of the successes and failures inherent in sport. These are the stories that keep fans coming back for more.

### CHAPTER THREE: CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES ON THE THEORY

Although any thorough analysis needs a strong foundation in theory, this particular topic also lends itself to discussion on a mass audience level. Football is the world's game, and to truly understand why, one must understand the narrative, not only through the eyes of scholars but through journalists who write in the words of the people. Consider the following illustrations of how the theories come to life.

#### **Establishing Third Culture and Football as an Exchange Ritual**

In a video clip with *Time*, international football superstar Didier Drogba lists Nelson Mandela as one of his biggest influences. (Harrell, 2010). Although he is best known as the former President of South Africa and an anti-apartheid activist, Mandela also harbors a deep admiration of sport. Consider the following quote he made during the 1996 African Nations Cup:

Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination. (Hughes, 2010)

Indeed, Mandela is no stranger to the unifying power of sport in general, and football in particular. During his imprisonment on South Africa's Robben Island in the 1960s, Mandela and other prisoners united around one of their few remaining rights: the right to play football (Perry, 2010).

In 1967, a prison warden finally agreed to allow the prisoners a thirty-minute period every Saturday to play football on prison grounds (Perry, 2010). Almost instantaneously, the prisoners set up two pitches and a twenty-four team league governed by FIFA rules (Perry, 2010). The prisoners saw that football was revolutionary under the regime of apartheid (Perry, 2010). Black players disproved the notion that they were inferior by displaying great physical skill for the game and the mental prowess to play the game creatively (Perry, 2010). The name of the game was fair play, which was “the sporting equivalent of human rights” (Perry, 2010).

As the prisoners at Robben Island discovered, football is a common language that makes intercultural communication possible. Fans all across the world revel in the speed, skill, and sportsmanship required of a truly great footballer. This sportsmanship is clearly evident in the football tradition of the jersey swap. The exchange of jerseys between players at the end of a match is a longstanding ritual of respect and sportsmanship, and with each swap comes a story (Witz, 2010). Clint Mathis, a former U.S. international player says, “It’s just a sign of respect. You’re out there trying to kick each other and kill each other, but when the game’s said and done, it’s back to being friends (Witz, 2010). Although the jerseys of famous players can sell for a tidy profit, most players make the exchange out of pure ritual (Witz, 2010).

In fact, Ellis Cashmore, a professor of sociology, media and sport at England’s Staffordshire University, is particularly interested in the jersey exchange (Witz, 2010). Quoted in *The New York Times*, he says, “Exchange rituals are freighted with cultural functions, such as reinforcing social solidarity, affirming friendships and perpetuating economic partnerships” (Witz, 2010). He compares the exchange to *kula*, a system of

ceremonial gift exchange that often precedes formal trading in the Trobriand Islands in the Southwest Pacific (Witz, 2010). According to Cashmore, *kula* “kept what might otherwise have been fractious relations peaceful” (Witz, 2010). He says the jersey swap has a similar function, helping to foster stronger and more peaceful intercultural relationships, if only for the fleeting moment of exchange (Witz, 2010).

### **Samuel Eto’o and the “Global Game”: Using the Game for Good**

When football fans think of the highest paid players in the game, they most likely think of the thoroughbred stars of European and South American superpowers like Italy, Germany, Argentina, or Brazil. It may come as a surprise, then, to some fans that the footballer with the world’s highest salary is Samuel Eto’o of the western African nation of Cameroon. As the captain and “uncrowned king” of Cameroon, Eto’o lets his football accomplishments speak for themselves. Already named African Player of the Year three times, Eto’o is also the only player to ever achieve football’s “royal flush” with two different teams in consecutive years. Eto’o led Spain’s *Fútbol Club Barcelona* and Italy’s *Football Club Internazionale Milano* to National League, National Cup and European Champions League titles in 2009 and 2010, respectively. Although his accomplishments are amazing, Eto’o also represents a true rags-to-riches story. The details of this story, chronicled below, come from John Carlin’s 2010 *Time* article, “The Global Game.”

Eto’o grew up in the coastal city of Douala in what he describes as “very, very humble” conditions. For young Eto’o, playing football barefoot and with a ball made of plastic bags bound with tape “offered life’s fun and consolation.” His break came at age twelve when a sports academy in Douala called *l'Ecole de Football des Brasseries du*

*Cameroun* brought him onboard. The rest, as they saw, was history. Although Eto'o's path to professional football in Barcelona had some ups and downs, he eventually made his way to the world's biggest stage.

Of course, things have not always been rosy for the Cameroonian star. Like many African stars playing in Europe, Eto'o has encountered scores of racism, not from his teammates, but from the fans. Eto'o tells the story of a time during his tenure in Barcelona where fans in Zaragoza, Spain spent the entire game making monkey noises at him. Although Eto'o says this kind of blatant racism is not common in Europe, he calmly says, "But football reflects life, and in life, such idiocy exists, unfortunately." Football has a history of bringing about conflict and violence, but it has also been a remarkably strong force of unity in the unlikelyst of places.

As Carlin writes in *Time* mere days before the 2010 FIFA World Cup, "[W]ith the exception of war, nothing brings out a shared sense of national identity, of almost family belonging, like international soccer competition." A stunning example of this phenomenon comes from Rwanda. In the wake of the Rwandan genocide of 1994, over one hundred thousand alleged murderers from the Hutu majority were jailed for their attempts to eliminate the Tutsis. When forty thousand of them received amnesty in 2003, there was a football match to mark the occasion. Held in a town where the murders had been especially gruesome, the match pitted Hutu *génocidaires* against relatives of their victims. The sides put their bloody past behind them and vowed to live together once again as five thousand fans and only two policemen watched the action. The Tutsi team won 1-0, but all participants said "the contest had been a victory for peace."

Such displays of peace and harmony despite past experiences of hatred are truly special. As Samuel Eto'o says, "Soccer is pure sentiment and a spectacle that transcends all borders. It's the best weapon against political conflict." Those who are closely involved with the sport are hard at work, attempting to use that "sentiment" for social change across the world. In Africa, Latin America, and Asia, health educators are leveraging football as bait for raising educational standards and increasing awareness for combating AIDS, malaria, and other dangerous and deadly diseases. Similar programs have been prevalent on the African continent as a result of the recent 2010 FIFA World Cup and have been popular for major sportswear companies like Nike and Adidas.

Although the corporate giants of international football are pulling their weight, the game's individual stars like Eto'o are often the ones taking the initiative on social issues. Eto'o started a foundation for African children that combines football, education, and health. "The foundation is about sharing the smile I have on my face with as many people as possible," Eto'o says. For Eto'o, making children happy is an irreplaceable joy, but he was also extremely proud to represent his native Cameroon in the first World Cup on the African continent. "If I had not played for my country, everything else I have achieved would have left me with an empty feeling." Coming from a young man who has reached the pinnacle of his sport, these are powerful words indeed.

### **Didier Drogba: Villain on the Pitch, Philanthropist Across the Globe**

Samuel Eto'o is a superstar and a leader in the international football community, but he has been matched, and even surpassed in some ways, by another African player, Didier Drogba. A striker for England's Chelsea Football Club and captain of the Côte



d'Ivoire national team, Drogba is famous for his balance of power and grace (Harrell, 2010). One English fan gave him the title of “scariest player in the world” (Harrell, 2010). Despite his threatening persona on the football pitch, his humanitarian efforts helped name him to the 2010 *Time* 100, the magazine’s list of the world’s most influential people (Harrell, 2010).

In his native Côte d'Ivoire, Drogba is the face of the country (Hayes, 2007). On street corners all across the nation, Drogba’s face appears on billboards advertising seemingly everything from chocolate to cell phones (Hayes, 2007). Although he has appeared in public numerous times, one in particular will stand out in the history of Côte d'Ivoire. In October 2005, civil war had been ravaging the land for five years when Drogba led the national team to a berth in the 2006 FIFA World Cup (Hayes, 2007). Surrounded by teammates in the dressing room mere moments after the game, Drogba took a microphone and fell to his knees (Hayes, 2007). On national television, he pleaded with the warring sides to lay down their weapons (Hayes, 2007). Within a week, the sides did just that (Hayes, 2007).

Describing his momentous act, Drogba said the decision to speak out was pure instinct (Hayes, 2007). “All the players hated what was happening to our country and reaching the World Cup was the perfect emotional wave on which to ride” (Hayes, 2007). The call to peace reached its conclusion when the national team played versus Madagascar in a qualifying match for the African Nations Cup (Hayes, 2010). During the national anthems before the match, fans and players alike could see the leaders of the warring sides standing side by side (Hayes, 2010). It was at that moment that Drogba said he believed “that the Ivory Coast was born again (Hayes, 2010). In creating that rebirth,

Drogba did something that perhaps no other player could have done (Hayes, 2007).

Drogba is like a god to the Ivorian people because he speaks out for them; he is an advocate of the masses (Hayes, 2007). The famous footballer says it best himself: “I have won many trophies in my time, but nothing will ever top helping win the battle for peace in my country (Hayes, 2007).

Drogba’s humanitarian efforts don’t stop there. In January 2007, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) appointed Drogba as a Goodwill Ambassador for the fight against poverty (Poltier-Mutal, 2007). In this role, Drogba will follow the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which pledge to cut world poverty in half by 2015, while also fighting hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental destruction, and discrimination against women (Poltier-Mutal, 2007). On November 13, 2009, he pledged 3 million British pounds, or roughly U.S. \$4.8 million from a sponsorship contract with Pepsi to build a hospital in his native country (Williamson, 2009). Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich also made a donation in a show of support for his star player (Williamson, 2009). The superstar launched his Didier Drogba Foundation in his hometown of Abidjan in 2007 (Williamson, 2009). The Foundation’s primary objective is simple: “to build and fund a hospital giving people basic healthcare and a chance just to stay alive” (Williamson, 2009).

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE HISTORY OF FIFA AND THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL**

### **FIFA: Bringing the World of Football Together**

In 2004, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) celebrated its centennial anniversary. At the time of its establishment in 1904, FIFA had only seven members, all of which were European. In the years since then, FIFA has witnessed and guided a massive and global expansion in the game's popularity. It now boasts 208 member national associations. This massive increase in membership signifies much more than just rising popularity. As Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) write, international football is now subject to a variety of outside influences, including the fluctuations of international relations, the growth of nations, and nationalism. How did FIFA grow from a small European federation to a titan of global sport and intercultural communication? The answer lies in FIFA's structure and history.

Politically and fiscally autonomous, FIFA organizes international football into six regional confederations. They are: (1) UEFA: *Union des Associations Européennes de Football*, formed in 1954; (2) CONMEBOL: *Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol*, formed in 1916; (3) CONCACAF: *Confederación Norte-/Centroamericana y del Caribe de Fútbol*, formed in 1961; (4) CAF: *Confédération Africaine de Football*, formed in 1957; (5) AFC: Asian Football Confederation, formed in 1954; and (6) OFC: Oceania Football Confederation, formed in 1966. The languages of the confederations' titles and FIFA's own name speak to the early dominance of Spanish, French, and English influences on the origins of world football organization. Despite early European dominance, FIFA now appears to be more democratic. In fact, each and every member is

entitled to an equal vote in FIFA's congresses, regardless of size. Together, the members of FIFA are working to protect and globalize the beautiful game.

### **Globalizing the Beautiful Game**

In 1904, the European nations of France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland formed FIFA (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The early years were marked by gradual and uneven expansion in the face of tension, with England remaining skeptical about joining an international federation for the sport it had created. The British remained arrogantly isolationist, as they had dominance of the International Football Association Board, the rule-making body for football (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Tension between the fledgling FIFA and British football associations included disputes over contact with Germany and its allies after World War I and controversies regarding athletes' amateur status (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). England, which was reluctant to join FIFA at first, left in 1928 before rejoining FIFA after World War II (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

In the pre-FIFA years, the English mindset may best have been described as follows: "Britain invented the game, gave it to the world and was going to damn well control it!" (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 10). Before the turn of the twentieth century, the English believed that world football was too weak to be bothered with, and at the time, they were most likely right (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). This led to a strained relationship between FIFA and England for much of the first half of the twentieth century. England may have felt as though it was a superior football power, but

England and the rest of Europe would soon learn that teams across the globe had learned and mastered the beautiful game.

At the time of FIFA's formation, of course, the world's political geography was significantly different than it is today. Many of FIFA's current members did not yet exist as independent nations. The years before World War I marked "the watershed of imperialism through which the governance of most of the world had been carved up among a small number of European states" (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 11). Among the leading imperial powers was England, and their flag flew over nearly one third of the world's territory (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). As a result, organized sport, especially football, spread throughout the world "on the coat-tails of the British Empire" (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 11).

Although the English felt as though they had "given" football to the world, the game spread largely through the industrial and commercial wake of the British Empire (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In fact, the spread of football was notable because the game became deeply entrenched in regions which were never colonized by the British (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Beginning in Europe and South America, English engineers, traders, commercial travelers, military personnel, and diplomats introduced the game to new nations (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Team sports like rugby and cricket, favorites of upper class colonial administrators, had spread more easily in British territories like South Africa and Australia (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Outside of the Empire, however, "there was social and cultural 'space' for football to develop as the national game" (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 11).

This was the case in countries like Germany, Russia, Italy, Brazil, and Argentina, which became superpowers of world football in due time (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). While Europe created FIFA, the world football's persona was born in the Americas, outside the reaches of the British Empire (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In the United States, fans were ambivalent about football, unwilling to embrace a game created by their former colonial master (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In Central and South America, however, football developed more easily in countries like Mexico, Chile, and Colombia. As Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) write, "In football, the newly independent countries of Latin America discovered a vehicle through which to express national self-determination, firstly within the sub-continent, but eventually on a world stage" (p. 11)

### **The Organizational Structure of FIFA**

While it appears that forces of imperialism helped spread football around the world, no one can ignore the impact FIFA has had on the global game. Today, FIFA enjoys its position at the top of international football and owes some of its success to a sound organizational structure. Headquartered in Switzerland, FIFA benefits directly from a Swiss governmental code which grants a special status to organizations like FIFA (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The Swiss Civil Code states the following in Article 60: "Associations which have a political, religious, scientific, artistic, charitable, social or any other than an industrial object, acquire the status of a person as soon as they show by their constitution their intention to have a corporate existence" (as cited in Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 48). As a result, FIFA is less vulnerable to constraints upon industry (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

With its organizational status intact, FIFA follows four distinct objectives in order to bring the game to the world. They are, in short: (1) the promotion of football “in every way [FIFA] deems fit; (2) the fostering of “friendly relations” among members; (3) the “control of every type of association football” and upholding a principle of non-discrimination; and (4) the provision for resolving disputes between national associations (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 49). With these far-reaching goals, FIFA is a global protector of the game, as well as an ambassador for peace and fair play. Besides being admitted as a member of the United Nations, membership in FIFA is one of the clearest signals that a country’s status as a nation-state has been internationally recognized (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

FIFA manages to stay true to its objectives through the strong leadership of the general secretary, called the FIFA Secretariat, and a variety of committees. The position of general secretary is a very powerful one, and the responsibilities include a variety of administrative, publicity, and technical work (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The FIFA committee structure consists of the “all controlling” Executive Committee,” the emergency committee, and fourteen standing committees (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 53). All of the committees are subservient to the policy-making Executive Committee (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Although the many committees have their specific functions, they are not always very powerful. As Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) write, “Committees are formed and run by the FIFA president and general secretary in an essentially oligarchic style” (p. 55).

Although one may describe FIFA as an oligarchy, the executives are not usually the ones making major decisions. The “supreme body of FIFA” is actually its Congress,

which is “the ultimate decision-making body of the organization and the only source for organizational change (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 58). FIFA holds Congresses every two years, and the voting processes are very straightforward (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Considering the fact that Congress decides most issues on public votes and a three-quarter majority is required for most business, FIFA is a rather conservative organization (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Creating change requires a great deal of lobbying, organizing, and mobilizing (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

FIFA’s organizational structure is interesting because it operates behind what Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) call a democratic façade:

In formal terms FIFA is a democratic institution accountable to its members and to its congress. In reality, in the last quarter of the twentieth century it was operated more like a fiefdom or a medieval court, conveniently cumbersome to bring together as one, and based upon patronage dispensed from the centre and deference expressed in return (p. 71)

Although FIFA appears democratic from the outside, insiders believe it to be more oligarchic. Some believe FIFA has become “widely perceived as a source for the aggrandizement of nations and individuals seeking recognition and Status on the global stage” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 72). Naturally, a global organization such as FIFA will have its critics. Nevertheless, one cannot ignore the success FIFA has had in promoting football around the world.



### **Tapping Football's Global Market**

In the modern media age, FIFA saw that the press, broadcasting, and television became vital for the worldwide growth of the game (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Beginning in 1965, UEFA Secretary Hans Bergerter began asking how FIFA could use the media to best serve the game (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). He had the idea, which is now common practice, to have an expert correspondent or commentator for the game who would educate the viewing public on the Laws of the Game, key players, and strategies (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The commentator was meant to be “a moral agent, a communicator with the capacity to convert the unconverted to the values of the game” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 73).

One of FIFA's biggest earners in television broadcasting has been the annual UEFA Champions League, arguably the world's most prestigious club football competition. The final match of the Champions League is the most watched annual sporting event worldwide. UEFA's marketing consultants, The Event Agency & Marketing (TEAM), have said that the success of the Champions League demonstrates the “must have” appeal of football competition to broadcasters (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 75). For FIFA in general and UEFA in particular, football and television broadcasting have been a match made in heaven. According to a UEFA Champions League Season Review, “Football has benefitted financially from the principle of solidarity and the concept of transparency with the revenues generated flowing back into football” (as cited in Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 76). Although the Champions League has seen great success, FIFA's biggest success naturally comes from its flagship tournament, the World Cup.

The World Cup now provides some of the largest television audiences of all time, and its television rights have become big business. Once the television industry recognized the potential of “football’s cross-cultural appeal,” profits from the World Cup skyrocketed (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 82). In addition to the profits from television broadcasting, marketers saw that rights marketing and, more importantly, sponsorship of the World Cup, would be the key to stable forms of revenue for FIFA (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Patrick Nally was responsible for much of the early growth of sports sponsorship in England (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In the 1970s, Nally secured Coca-Cola as a global partner for FIFA (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

This expanded into accompanying forms of sports marketing which became vital to FIFA’s success (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Bringing Coca-Cola on as a sponsor created the blueprint for bringing money into international sports federations. The multi-million dollar investment concentrated initially on developing the new youth World Cup tournament (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The sponsorship deal was a mutually beneficial one. Nally argues that FIFA’s connection to Coca-Cola gives the organization an aura of respectability, generated by the brand’s global goodwill (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Marketers soon began to realize that “sport provides the ideal focus for companies seeking to impact in the global marketplace” because of the universal and unifying appeal of sport (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 91). Today, Coca-Cola remains one of FIFA’s primary partners, along with Adidas, Emirates, Sony, Hyundai, and Visa. These partnerships, along with excellent broadcasting and the uniting force of football, have made FIFA a giant among world sport federations.

## CHAPTER FIVE: TRACING THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD CUP

### The FIFA World Cup: “The People’s Passion”

In the years between the World Wars, South American dominance of international football signaled that the beautiful game had been adopted and mastered outside of Europe (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Uruguay was among the first South American titans to rise to power, shocking European football fans by winning the Gold medal at the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In 1928, Uruguay proved to have the best football team in the world once more, winning another Olympic Gold on European soil, this time in Amsterdam (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The final match pitted Uruguay against Argentina. In the streets and squares of Montevideo and Buenos Aires, massive crowds formed as loyal and nationalistic fans awaited news from Europe about the game. (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). This created what author Tony Mason called “one of the key moments in the process by which football became the people’s passion” (as cited in Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 23).

Quite naturally, FIFA wanted to station itself in the midst of that passion and national pride in the period after the First World War and become more than just a regulatory body for football (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In the 1920s, a visionary group of French football administrators had the idea to bring together the world's best national football teams to compete for the title of World Champions (FIFA, 2010a). Jules Rimet, FIFA President from 1921 to 1954, led these men in creating the template for the World Cup, and the original trophy bore his name from 1930 until 1970 (FIFA, 2010a).

Considering the trend of South American dominance of Olympic football in the 1920s, it was perhaps no surprise that the first national team to hoist the Jules Rimet

Trophy was the Uruguayan national team in 1930. Before 93,000 spectators and on home soil in Montevideo, Uruguay defeated Argentina in the first World Cup Final (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Uruguayan diplomats lobbied President Rimet in Geneva as early as 1925 for the privilege of hosting the World Cup (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Not coincidentally, 1930 was “the centenary celebrations of the adoption of Uruguay’s national constitution” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 23). Uruguayan officials so badly wanted to host the World Cup during this celebration that they even agreed to pay the travel and hotel costs of all participating teams (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The gracious host also constructed the new Centenario Stadium, which Rimet himself hailed as a “temple of football” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 23).

The wild popularity of the tournament and the quality play by South American teams in the early World Cup tournaments showed the British that the game they had invented had truly become “a credible global presence” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 23). These early World Cups were not, however, all about global peace and harmony. Many of the actions in the early World Cups were indirectly and implicitly political (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). There was, of course, the Uruguayan government’s desire to sustain its team’s Olympic success in front of a patriotic home crowd while also demonstrating the power of South American football (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Furthermore, as W. J. Murray writes in *Football*, the 1934 World Cup in Italy was essentially a pawn in Mussolini’s strategy to use sport to heighten nationalism: “Sport was a distraction and a means of indoctrination; a healthy pursuit and a preparation for the military; it was also an important organ of propaganda, inspiring nationalism at home by winning glory abroad” (as cited in Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 101).

Ironically, then, these World Cups were far from festivals of intercultural peace and harmony (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The first World Cup, with its final match between Uruguay and Argentina, was in many ways simply “a regional metropolitan affair,” a clash between Montevideo and Buenos Aires, located across the *Río de la Plata* from one another (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). The first World Cups were as much national as international (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). They were, in varying cases, either supported by authoritarian states, won by host countries against local rivals, or reported on and celebrated most intensively at the local and national level (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). As a result, it seems that political aspirations and authoritarian actions helped institutionalize FIFA’s flagship tournament (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). This was FIFA’s central paradox in the early years: it represented “supranational and internationalist ideals by providing a platform for the display of nationalist identity and cultural superiority” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 103).

As the FIFA World Cup expanded in popularity, however, the tournament became more and more global, and the bidding process to host the World Cup intensified into a race of increasingly high political and economic stakes (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). There was relatively little fighting and competition over the privilege of hosting the World Cup until the bidding process for the 1966 tournament (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). This was the first World Cup over which the major Western European nations seriously competed for hosting privileges in the post-World War II years (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). At the decisive FIFA Congress in 1960, England won a close vote over West Germany after Spain withdrew its bid before the ballot (Sugden and

Tomlinson, 1998). After years of deference to the rising football powers in South America, England finally got its turn to host, winning the 1966 World Cup on home soil.

The competition for the staging of the 1970 World Cup, however, was much more intense (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). In 1964, FIFA President Sir Stanley Rous was alarmed at the great lengths, both economic and interpersonal, to which Mexico and Argentina went in their competition to host the 1970 World Cup (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Rous developed a new planning model, which he called “the long look ahead” in order to give hosts more time to plan (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 104). In his words, this would establish “a twelve year location plan for the World Cup so that countries concerned could plan at leisure” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 104). This added time allowed the host to plan for the World Cup at its leisure, while allowing FIFA more time to oversee the process (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). FIFA accepted this new model at its 1964 Congress in Tokyo (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

### **World Cup Football: Big Business on a Global Scale**

Every four years, 32 of the world’s strongest, fastest, and best football teams converge on a beautiful cosmopolitan locale in a battle royal to determine who will bear the distinct honor of World Champion. What could possibly make for more captivating drama? The FIFA World Cup is naturally a huge winner in television ratings, and the recent 2010 edition saw soaring viewership numbers, even in the United States, where football fans often appear to be few and far between. During the United States’ loss to Ghana in the Round of 16, ABC boasted 14.9 million viewers, an American record for

World Cup viewership (Sandomir, 2010). An additional 4.5 million viewers tuned in to Univision for the same game (Sandomir, 2010).

In total, that accounts for 19.4 million viewers for a Round of 16 game on a summer Saturday afternoon (Sandomir, 2010). It may be hard for some to believe that Fox averaged the same number of viewers during the six primetime games of the 2009 World Series between the Philadelphia Phillies and the New York Yankees (Sandomir, 2010). According to Stephen Master, vice president for sports at the Nielsen Company, “If the U.S. had kept going, to the quarters and semifinal, you would have gotten really big numbers” (Sandomir, 2010). Although the viewership in the U.S. paled in comparison to the Super Bowl, it is clear that the World Cup is a titanic television spectacle, even among American audiences.

Executives at ESPN and Univision said the tournament’s ratings performance exceeded their expectations (Sandomir, 2010). This is interesting news considering ESPN claimed that its 2010 World Cup marketing campaign was the biggest the network had ever created for a single event (Sandomir, 2010). In the end, the investment was well worth it for ESPN. According to John Skipper, ESPN’s executive vice president for content, “This is a good, sound financial proposition for us. We have the 2014 rights in Brazil, at a favorable time that gives us a favorable financial opportunity” (Sandomir, 2010). The 2014 FIFA World Cup will be in Brazil, and Rio de Janeiro’s time zone is only one hour later than New York City’s (Sandomir, 2010). This will push the World Cup matches to primetime and bring ad rates through the ceiling (Sandomir, 2010).

Before getting too optimistic about future success, however, ESPN executives reveled in their recent success in the 2010 World Cup. The network saw a 28% increase

from 2006 in ratings for games not including the U.S. team, a 38% jump in the ratings for men 18 to 49, and a 29% increase in ratings in Hispanic households (Sandomir, 2010).

Glenn Enoch, ESPN's vice president for integrated media research, adds: "There is growing interest in soccer" (Sandomir, 2010). He goes on to refer to ESPN's investment in the World Cup "as an investment in the future" (Sandomir, 2010). Given these strong ratings, the future looks bright indeed.

As a result of all of this potential profit and the inherent prestige, having the privilege of hosting the FIFA World Cup has become a nearly irresistible proposition for many nations (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Hosting the World Cup delivers rationale for repairing communication and civic infrastructures; it provides a forum for the celebration of national pride, and it has the capacity to deliver massive profits to the host country (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Given the possibility of pocketing large profits, "the process of gaining the World Cup Finals has become unprecedentedly big business" (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998, p. 100). Although the bidding process has become an expensive and ruthless contest among nations, most national ambassadors and organizers stand behind the idea that hosting the World Cup will provide massive profits to the host country (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

In reality, however, it appears that FIFA runs away with much of the profit from the World Cup. The next chapters will discuss the questionable economic benefits of hosting the FIFA World Cup. Although the tournament generates massive revenue, it appears very little of that money ends up in the hands of the host nation, as FIFA skims a great deal of the profit of the top to fill its own coffers. Without much tangible economic benefit, there must be a reason the bidding process for hosting the World Cup is such a



fierce competition. There must be a reason nation after nation has lined up for the chance to host. With this in mind, the upcoming chapters will also discuss the more intangible benefits of the global exposure, prestige, and nation-building that accompany the distinct privilege of hosting the World Cup.

## **CHAPTER SIX: THE QUESTIONABLE ECONOMICS OF HOSTING THE WORLD CUP**

### **“Only FIFA Wins the World Cup”**

As Chapter 5 indicates, the FIFA World Cup generates a staggering amount of profit. The commercial income FIFA stood to make on the 2010 World Cup totaled approximately \$3.60 billion for television rights, sponsorship, and merchandising. When all is said and done, FIFA generated a profit of about \$1.15 billion, which it either retains to promote its own internal projects or disburses to member national football associations. What, then, does the host nation get as a return on its investment? Current estimates claim that the cost of hosting the World Cup produced a \$4.91 billion burden on South African taxpayers. True to traditional form, organizers of this World Cup claimed that hosting the event would have significant economic impact, both by boosting the construction industry through building stadiums, and by creating an influx of tourists. Despite these claims, however, it doesn't appear that the hosts receive much return on their staggering economic investments.

On the topic of stadium construction, the question is not whether the construction generates income; the question is whether or not there is a better use of the resources. Building a stadium worthy of the World Cup requires skilled labor and expensive materials that may be put to better use elsewhere. In a developing country like South Africa, building roads, houses, and other infrastructure would seem to be a much more prudent expenditure of money and resources. This is especially true when considering that many World Cup stadiums will have limited use after the event is over. The stadium at Green Point in Cape Town, for example, cost over \$655 million to construct, but held

only eight games in the World Cup. While FIFA does not have to pay for stadium construction, it does get to place its brand all over the development projects, thus taking the credit while leaving the burden on the host nation. In a nation where many people live without basic facilities, many believe that such wild spending is questionable at best.

Similarly, the outlook for the host nation appears bleak in regards to increased tourism. Put simply, the World Cup does not attract as many unique tourists as one might imagine, and for two reasons. First, some tourists might have wanted to visit the host nation regardless, and decided to schedule their trip during the World Cup for added excitement. Second, potential tourists may choose to avoid the country altogether while the event is in full swing. Take, for example, the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece. The nation welcomed 14 million tourists in 2003, but only 13 million in 2004. Worse still, consider the 2002 FIFA World Cup, jointly hosted by Japan and South Korea. The hosts were hoping for an influx of affluent tourists, but because of their extreme distance from the U.S. and Western Europe, Japan saw only about 38,000 more tourists than the previous year, while South Korea lost over 56,000.

Although FIFA takes pride in granting the hosting rights to a variety of nations from all across the globe and economic spectrum, this policy has its disadvantages. Wealthier nations like the United States or the United Kingdom can more easily handle the economic burden of hosting. Developing nations like South Africa, however, do not have it so easy. Consider the following comparison. The U.K. government spends about \$131 billion each year on education, while South Africa spends about \$19.7 billion. Compare that to the \$14.7 billion estimated to be spent on the 2012 Olympic Games in London and the \$4.91 billion cost of hosting the World Cup. While the U.K. is spending

just over 10 percent of its education budget on the 2012 Olympics, South Africa spent nearly one quarter of its annual education budget to host the 2010 World Cup.

This is certainly food for thought, especially in a developing nation such as South Africa. Keep in mind, however, that all the facts and figures thus far in this section stem from a single article entitled “Only FIFA Wins the World Cup” from the British political magazine *New Statesman*. I suspect that author Stefan Szymanski may be slightly biased against FIFA allowing developing nations to host the World Cup instead of granting the privilege to developed nations like the U.K. Keep in mind, England has not hosting the World Cup since 1966. At any rate, Szymanski (2010) lays down a crucial thesis about hosting the World Cup: “[W]hat wins you the bid is the promise to lay on lavish games to the greater glory of FIFA ... largely at the public expense” (p. 28)

### **Hosting the World Cup: Economic Gift or Curse?**

Despite Szymanski’s (2010) pessimistic analysis, a great many politicians, national associations, and members of the popular media see it as a matter of great prestige and national pride to host the FIFA World Cup. Given the profits generated by the World Cup, most people would assume that the economic benefits of hosting the tournament would be rather clear. Szymanski (2010), however, is not alone in his critique of the World Cup. As Sturges & Brady (2006) write, there is a large, growing, and divided debate in economic studies regarding whether or not hosting the World Cup creates any “concrete net economic benefits to the host country at all” (p. 146). Some studies claim significant short- and long-term macroeconomic benefits such as increased GDP and greater employment (Sturges & Brady, 2006). More pessimistic studies, on

the other hand, indicate that hosting the World Cup has a negligible, or even negative, impact on economic growth in the host country (Sturges & Brady, 2006).

In order to explain these vast differences in the economic literature, Sturges & Brady (2006) place the studies into two categories: *ex ante* studies, which are produced before the event occurs, and *ex post* studies which are produced after the event is over. Why, then, are most of the *ex ante* studies overly optimistic about the potential gains of hosting the World Cup? Put simply, those leaders who have a direct interest in the country hosting the World Cup call for and organize the optimistic studies. As Szymanski (2002) writes, “The studies are commissioned before the event by promoters anxious to claim that investments—usually from the public purse—have been well spent (as cited in Sturges & Brady, 2006). Naturally, countries do not usually return to these claims after the World Cup to determine whether or not the claimed benefits actually materialize (Sturges & Brady, 2006).

However, Szymanski’s (2002) point that most optimistic studies are made before the World Cup does not consider *ex post* studies of the long-term impact of hosting the tournament (Sturges & Brady, 2006). In fact, short-term macroeconomic studies of the impact of hosting large-scale events such as the World Cup tend to be unreliable altogether (Sturges & Brady, 2006). While *ex ante* studies are almost all overly optimistic, *ex post* macroeconomic studies show little or no economic impact, most likely because of inadequate methodology or inaccurate data (Sturges & Brady, 2006). The majority of these *ex post* studies are, in fact, “a waste of time” because “they ignore the longer-term impact of structural and intangible changes on industries and markets that might arise from hosting an event” (Sturges & Brady, 2006).

In order to determine such long-term impacts, Sturges & Brady (2006) suggest applying a cost-benefit analysis to hosting the World Cup. They cite Rahmann & Kurscheidt (2002), whose model predicts that it will not be until two or three years after a World Cup that economists can completely determine the costs and benefits to the host (Sturges & Brady, 2006). In the sports industry in general, and in football in particular, we judge economic benefits according to three main sources of income. Those sources are: (1) match-day attendance, which includes ticket sales, programs, and catering; (2) commercial revenue, including sponsorship, stadium advertising, and merchandising; and (3) income from the sale of broadcast rights (Sturges & Brady, 2006). Increases in these sources of revenue indicate an increase in the popularity of the sport and, to a lesser extent, an increase in the nation's GDP (Sturges & Brady, 2006). The increasing popularity of the sport also corresponds with a greater demand for sporting goods and the use of sports facilities, as well as an increase in public health (Sturges & Brady, 2006).

Take, for example, the 1994 FIFA World Cup in the United States. The packed-to-capacity crowds for football matches during the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles proved that there was, indeed, a football market in the U.S. (Sturges & Brady, 2006). After lobbying from U.S. Soccer, FIFA awarded the 1994 World Cup to the U.S. in 1988, after the promise that U.S. Soccer would establish an elite professional football league (Sturges & Brady, 2006). As a result, Major League Soccer (MLS) began in 1996, opening to a crowd of nearly 32,000 fans in the first ever MLS match (Sturges & Brady, 2006). Today, MLS Commissioner Don Garber sees the construction of "soccer specific" stadiums as crucial for the continued development of the sport (Sturges & Brady, 2006).

In turn, the construction and maintenance of new football stadiums in cities across the nation will create jobs and help stimulate local economies.

Although football is more prominent in France, the game felt a similar “shot in the arm” by the 1998 World Cup, in which France was both the host and champion (Sturges & Brady, 2006, p. 161). In the two football seasons after France’s victory in 1998, the French football league, *Ligue 1*, boasted a 34.7% rise in average attendance per game (Sturges & Brady, 2006). Attendance has since leveled off to a more normal level, but one cannot help but notice the tangible “World Cup fever,” which began in 1992 when France won the right to host the World Cup (Sturges & Brady, 2006, p. 162). Increased fan turnout created additional revenue for the French clubs, but it also increased the value of the league’s broadcasting rights (Sturges & Brady, 2006). Most importantly, it shows that “World Cup fever” lasts long after the champions hoist the FIFA World Cup Trophy, perhaps making the economic investments worthwhile after all.

South Africans, however, may have a more difficult time keeping “World Cup fever” alive than the French. When the French team hoisted the FIFA World Cup Trophy in 1998, they became only the sixth nation in history to host and win the same World Cup, adding their names to the legendary ranks of Uruguay, Italy, England, West Germany, and Argentina. By contrast, the 2010 South African team became the first hosts ever to be eliminated in the opening round of the World Cup. It would be fair to assume that South Africans would have a more difficult time maintaining “World Cup fever” without a World Champion national team. This summer, South Africans saw just how strong the unifying force of football is. For them to feel sustained national pride and satisfaction from their team, however, the team needs to improve. Danny Jordaan, chief

executive of the World Cup organizing committee, puts it bluntly: “The way we can sustain national support is to get a winning team ... No one is going to celebrate defeat” (Marcus, 2010a).

With the 2010 World Cup in the history books, the South African Football Association has now absorbed between \$80 and \$100 million, mostly from ticket sales (Marcus, 2010a). The future of the South African team will hinge upon how wisely that money is spent (Marcus, 2010a). According to Steve Bloomfield, author of *Africa United: How Football Explains Africa*, the leaders of the South African Football Association have been “more interested in politics, power and patronage than in improving the standards of the game” (as cited in Marcus, 2010). The South African Premier League has the seventh-richest television contract in the world, but the teams have neither the academies to develop youth talent nor the ability to attract international stars (Marcus, 2010a). Jordaan believes South Africa should take its cue from the U.S., which used money from the World Cup to establish Major League Soccer and youth development programs for the betterment of the game in South Africa (Marcus, 2010a).

Of course, the economic impact of the World Cup is being felt far from the football pitch in South Africa. The South African government, along with help from provincial and municipal governments, spent billions of dollars in infrastructure and construction. As South African finance minister Pravin Gordhan says, “The long-term benefits are these investments in infrastructure. Once you build a road, it doesn’t disappear once the World Cup ends” (Marcus, 2010a). Gordhan also forecasts a 0.4% increase in the nation’s real gross domestic product, which equals roughly \$5 billion (Marcus, 2010a). FIFA President Sepp Blatter added to the optimistic rhetoric



surrounding South Africa: “Since the World Cup has been attributed to South Africa in 2004, definitely the economy of South Africa is rising, and they’re not any longer considered a developing country but an emerging country” (Marcus, 2010a).

However, not everyone looking at the economic picture in South Africa shares the same rose colored glasses. According to the *New York Times*, unemployment is hovering near 25%, and many of the optimistic young people of South Africa are finding themselves without a job now that the tournament is finished (Vecsey, 2010). For the short-term, there does not appear to be concrete evidence that this World Cup will lead to any long-term jobs or stability (Vecsey, 2010). Nevertheless, Gordhan cautions, “We don’t look at revenue now. You have to look at the benefits hard and soft over a 20-year period” (Marcus, 2010a). Only time will tell what long-term economic legacy this World Cup will leave in South Africa. In the meantime, however, Danny Jordaan is confident that now people “know South Africa better, as a place of business and pleasure and culture” (Vecsey, 2010). It is this kind of intangible benefit that can make hosting the World Cup worthwhile.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: THE “SOCIAL PROFITABILITY” OF HOSTING THE WORLD CUP**

### **South Africa: The Future of the African Continent**

Indeed, the benefits of hosting the FIFA World Cup do not all come in the form of concrete economic gains. Gouguet (2002) argues that the debate over whether or not there is economic benefit to hosting the World Cup “misses the point” (as cited in Sturges & Brady, 2006, p. 155). According to Gouguet, “positive externalities, such as ‘social cohesion, creation of jobs, decrease in delinquency’, can arise from sports projects [and] the economic impact must assimilate the ‘social profitability’ of the project (as cited in Sturges & Brady, 2006, p. 155). Quite naturally, the benefits of hosting the World Cup extend far beyond the realm of what economists can quantify. A *Time* article explains the South African motive for hosting the World Cup: For South Africa, hosting meant “nothing less than a reaffirmation of its nationhood and the chance to inform billions of television and Internet viewers that the host country represents the thriving future of the continent” (Hirshey & Bennett, 2010).

Although FIFA pocketed \$3.60 billion from the 2010 World Cup, South Africa also profited, albeit in a less tangible way (Hughes, 2010). For South Africa, the “social profitability” is already beginning to accrue as a result of FIFA’s commitment to creating a better tomorrow in South Africa. FIFA President Sepp Blatter promised to help develop Africa through the power of sport, and he is beginning to make good on that promise through FIFA’s Football for Hope movement (Hughes, 2010). Football for Hope is “a unique and global movement that uses the power of football to achieve sustainable social development” (FIFA, 2010b, p. 4). The movement provides access to programs which

serve hundreds of thousands of youth across the globe (FIFA, 2010b). Football for Hope has supported over 80 social development programs in over 50 countries (FIFA, 2010b). The movement focuses primarily on health promotion, peace building, education & children's rights, anti-discrimination & social integration, and environmental issues (FIFA, 2010b). Its philosophy is simple: "to maximize the potential of football by making a concrete contribution to sustainable development (FIFA, 2010b, p. 4).

With these broad goals in mind, Football for Hope had some specific developmental objectives for Africa. 20 Centers for 2010 is the official Football for Hope campaign of the 2010 World Cup, which aims to promote public health, education, and football in disadvantaged communities in Africa (FIFA, 2010b). In light of the burden of HIV/AIDS on the greater African community, the Football for Hope Centers will include health-awareness programs and referrals to existing health facilities (FIFA, 2010b). In the classroom, young people will also have the opportunity to learn new skills such as computing and leadership skills (FIFA, 2010b). Finally, the centers use football as a tool for addressing social challenges and bringing communities together (FIFA, 2010b).

In addition, FIFA helped establish the 1GOAL campaign in an effort to affect long-term change in education (Marcus, 2010a). The campaign's aim is to provide education for the nearly 69 million children around the world who are denied the chance to go to school (Marcus, 2010a). Sepp Blatter was a chairman of the campaign, along with Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan (Marcus, 2010a). As Queen Rania says, "This is our moment to shine; we can bring millions of children in from the shadows of ignorance, and light up their lives with the legacy of education" (1GOAL, 2010). South African president Jacob Zuma has urged African leaders to eliminate barriers to

education such as school fees (Marcus, 2010a). By seizing the popularity and power of international football, 1GOAL aims to ensure “that education for all is a lasting impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup” (1GOAL, 2010).

Across the entire African continent, and in South Africa in particular, these movements are helping to ensure that the 2010 FIFA World Cup leaves a lasting legacy of social cohesion and development. These intangible benefits comprise the “social profitability” to which Gouget (2002) alludes. The benefits outlined above, however, only scratch the surface in terms of the social benefits bestowed upon South Africa. Recall from Chapter Two the three-pronged theoretical approach for this paper: sport as narrative, cultural identity theory, and sport as “third culture.” The following sections will explain how the 2010 FIFA World Cup has confirmed and added to these theories while showcasing the power of football as a cultural unifier, both for South Africans, and for football fans across the world.

### **Sport as Narrative: Telling the South African Story through the Language of Football**

This theory states that one of the ways in which modern cultures establish their identity is through their vicarious experiences of success and failure with sports teams. Many sports stories inspire us, while others are cautionary tales of the ways in which wealth and fame can corrupt sports stars. In the case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, there were many tales of triumph and celebration, both on and off the field. Take, for example, Coca-Cola’s official song for the World Cup program, “Wavin’ Flag (Celebration Mix)” by Somali-Canadian artist K’naan. The song’s uplifting tone and lyrics tell the story of

people united in celebration of their beloved football stars taking the field on the world's biggest stage to compete with the world's best.

A cursory overview of the song, however, misses the chance to probe deeper into its cultural significance. With its colloquial lyrics, this song tells a vivid story of a people that define themselves through the achievement of their World Cup team:

Give me freedom, give me fire / Give me reason, take me higher / See the  
champions take the field now / You define us, make us feel proud / In the  
streets our heads are liftin' / As we lose our inhibition / Celebration, it  
surrounds us / Every nation, all around us (K'naan, 2010).

These lyrics evoke images of a nation reinvigorated by the World Cup and overcome with gratitude for its heroic national football team. The outpouring of celebration brings the people closer together, both among themselves and with their football rivals.

While K'naan's song is powerful and celebratory, other narratives from this World Cup are a bit more sobering. Despite the partying and flair of the World Cup, let us not forget that South Africa is a nation with a great disparity between the wealthy and the impoverished. Many of the proud people of South Africa survive with surprisingly little. One strong example is the story of 15-year-old Golomino Thooe, as chronicled in Mark Jeevaratnam's short documentary film submitted as part of the Pulitzer Center/YouTube Project: Report contest. Thooe hails from Parys, a town in the Free State province of South Africa (Jeevaratnam, 2010). As the film describes, the secondary school attendance rate for South African males was only 41% between 2003 and 2008. In Parys, however, a football team for boys under the age of 15 teaches important life skills

such as the value of teamwork while providing inspiration for a better life (Jeevaratnam, 2010). Indeed, some lessons simply cannot be taught in the classroom.

Thooe's young life has been one of many harsh lessons in survival. He comes from an impoverished, single-parent family (Jeevaratnam, 2010). Nine years ago, Gomolimo's mother, Cindy Matlaletsa, discovered she was HIV positive shortly after her husband died of AIDS (Jeevaratnam, 2010). Despite her condition, Gomolimo has tried to support his mother in every way he can (Jeevaratnam, 2010). Although Cindy was concerned that Gomolimo might be disgraced by her condition, he remains proud and supportive of her: "We shouldn't treat her differently just because she has the virus. I should support her and I feel proud of her for disclosing her status to everyone" (Jeevaratnam, 2010). Cindy describes the family's bleak history, including a time when they were living in a windowless shack and eating pig's food (Jeevaratnam, 2010).

Despite his difficult upbringing, Gomolimo is determined to make a name for himself, for his family, and for his town by becoming a star of international football. He describes his passion and drive for the beautiful game in detail in the film:

It's a big thing in my life. I'm not that bright at school. God gave me talent, so I have to use it. I want to be seen on TV playing for the national squad, be the first one to play for the national squad in Parys, and stand out for Parys. Soccer brings a lot to me. It keeps me out of lots of things like being part of a gang, drinking alcohol, and sitting around doing nothing. It keeps my body healthy. Soccer makes my body healthy, makes my brain okay and helps me relax and be like other children. (Jeevaratnam, 2010).

Clearly, it would be a remarkable story for this young man to beat the odds and become a football superstar. However, it is hard to question his unwavering faith in himself. When his family was living in a windowless shack, he promised his mother that one day they would have a house (Jeevaratnam, 2010). Lo and behold, they now have one. Perhaps one day he will add himself to the cultural narrative of South Africa as one of the rising stars of football, showing poor children across the nation and the world that they can indeed rise above poverty.

### **Cultural Identity Theory: Adding to the World Cup's Cultural Legacy**

Stuart Hall (1993) outlines a two-fold way of thinking about cultural identity theory. The first view of the theory states that cultural identities arise from and reflect collective historical experience and the shared meanings that establish the meaning of a given culture. The second view, however, is a more appealing way to look at cultural identity theory. Members of a culture are continually renegotiating their place within their culture, creating their cultural identity on a constant basis (Hall, 1993). As Hall (1993) writes, "Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'" (p.225). Although cultural identity is established in the past, it is continually expanded upon and refreshed. In the case of the 2010 World Cup, South Africans took this second view of the theory, adding to their culture's identity by establishing their nation as a successful World Cup host and promoter of peace and social development.

By successfully staging one of the world's largest and most popular events, South Africans proved to themselves and the world that they are a unified people. At the

conclusion of the World Cup, the rhetoric surrounding the South African people congratulated and celebrated them and their ability to unify despite the legacy of apartheid. As Danny Jordaan says, South Africans are full of pride and are “walking tall” now that the World Cup has been deemed a success (Marcus, 2010a). He continues, “For years, many South Africans have been told that they are inferior, that they are not good enough. The nation has crossed a huge psychological barrier” (Marcus, 2010a). Staging a successful tournament required the people to come together, regardless of their race, to be a part of a “once-in-a-lifetime happening” (Hughes, 2010).

For many South Africans, it may have appeared that the chance to host such an event would, in fact, never come. The nation launched unsuccessful bids for both the 2004 Olympics and the 2006 World Cup before finally getting the chance to showcase their culture on one of the world’s biggest stages (Hughes, 2010). After decades of striving for the chance to put South African culture on the world map, Danny Jordaan breathed a sigh of relief, not just for himself, but for the people of South Africa: “It has not just been about people coming here to discover South Africa — it was South Africans discovering themselves. And we needed this World Cup to do that” (Hughes, 2010). South Africans have discovered their ability to come together, to work together, and to be proud to showcase their culture for the world to see. As former South African president Thabo Mbeki says, “This successful World Cup is a statement to ourselves that we have the capacity to change. We have shown that the perception that Africans are less human than other races is quite wrong” (Hughes, 2010).

Although South Africans were brimming with pride at how well they worked together to stage the World Cup, they also had a chance to display their culture and add to



it through the 2010 Fine Art international exhibit. Artists from across the African continent, as well as five artists from each of the 32 nations competing in the World Cup were commissioned to produce original works celebrating the beautiful game in Africa (Marcus, 2010b). The exhibition was licensed by FIFA, which marked the first time FIFA has licensed original works of art (Marcus, 2010b). With funds from FIFA, the exhibit's managers were able to recruit top talent to produce works of art for the exhibit. All in all, there were 160 international artists expressing their unique perceptions of football in Africa (Marcus, 2010b).

The exhibit's managing director, Craig Mark, celebrates the exhibit as adding to the traditional intersection of sport and culture in society:

There has always been a natural synergy between sport and art and culture. If you go back and look at the bushman art, early cave painting, you see sport being illustrated within those paintings. In Africa, football plays a very important role in terms of our daily experience. You have a lot of these artists having never come to Africa but interpreting what they feel Africa is all about within their works. Some of the works are very abstract in nature. (Marcus, 2010b)

Indeed, a passion and love for the game and a special admiration for the African continent and culture comes through in a variety of ways through the works. In a similar fashion to the World Cup itself, this art exhibit brought together some of the most talented artists from around the world. But they did not just come together to compete; they came together to rejoice in, admire, and add to the blossoming culture of the host nation, South Africa.

### **Sport as “Third Culture”: We Are All Interconnected**

Recall from Chapter Two that Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese’s uncertainty reduction theory states that when strangers meet, their first goal is to reduce uncertainty and increase predictability in the new relationship (Neuliep, 2009). In order to achieve this goal, interactants in a relationship must establish empathy (Neuliep, 2009). According to Benjamin Broome’s model of relational empathy, when two people interact, they create a third culture of shared meaning as a result of shared values, beliefs, norms, and symbols (Neuliep, 2009). In this discussion of the World Cup, football is the third culture through which two cultures can express themselves and understand one another.

In South Africa, football created a unique third culture. Clearly, the World Cup offered a venue through which black and white South Africans could unite as one, despite the dark history of apartheid. In a July 2010 speech, Danny Jordaan explains the many ways in which the South African people have met and exceeded expectations for staging a wonderful World Cup. However, he also details how supporting the national football team, known throughout South Africa as “Bafana Bafana,” united South Africans of all races: “We also saw the unprecedented support of all South Africans of all colours for Bafana Bafana during the opening match on [June] 11<sup>th</sup>. As you know, football has traditionally been seen here as more of a ‘black sport’” (Jordaan, 2010). Despite its stigma as a “black sport,” football was the cause of much celebration. This was not just any football team; it was the culmination of years of hard work to rebrand South Africa as a world class destination for tourism, business, investment, and trade (Jordaan, 2010).

Throughout his speech, Jordaan emphasizes the ways that South Africa has succeeded in hosting the World Cup. In many ways, hosting the tournament served as a

massive public relations campaign on behalf of South Africa. Jordaan recalls a headline in 2000 on the cover of *The Economist* calling Africa a “hopeless continent” of civil war, hunger, and disease (Jordaan, 2010). A decade later, Jordaan proudly exclaims, “[T]his World Cup has shown that being African and being world class is synonymous” (Jordaan, 2010). Looking back on over sixteen years of hard work, Jordaan proudly states that hosting the World Cup has already begun to achieve its five-pronged set of goals, which include nation building, increasing tourism, rebranding South Africa, building infrastructure, and generating investment (Jordaan, 2010).

Of course, the World Cup also establishes third culture in a broader way by giving seemingly everyone in the world something to watch, something to talk about, and something to experience and celebrate together. One day before the Final match between Spain and the Netherlands, Jordaan spoke proudly of South Africa as the first African nation to host the world’s most important sporting event (Vecsey, 2010). As a commentary on how far South Africa has come as a nation, and in celebration of the remarkable coming together of nations at the World Cup, Jordaan began to wax poetic. He was reminded of the African ethical philosophy of *ubuntu*, which means we are all interconnected. Indeed, for one month in the summer of 2010, the entire world was interconnected through the shared experience of the World Cup and all the rich cultural narratives that go along with it. It was truly something to applaud.

In addition to *ubuntu*, Jordaan also cited the famous English metaphysical poet, John Donne (1624) and his famous *Meditation XVII*:

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent,  
a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less,

as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee (p. 100).

It is not typical of a chief World Cup organizer to quote centuries-old poetry, but then again, this was not an ordinary World Cup (Vecsey, 2010). As the first World Cup ever to be held on African soil, it served as a celebration of how far South Africa and the greater African continent have come. Ignoring a history of racism and conflict, South Africans showed an uncanny ability to work together to put on a marvelous show for the entire world to see.

Although this World Cup has hopefully elevated South Africa to world class status, it has also served as an impetus for change. If we truly are all interconnected, and if no man is an island, then don't we have an obligation to reach out and help one another? This, perhaps, is the true essence and spirit of the third culture. By establishing and celebrating the worldwide third culture of football, the World Cup uniquely shows that all football fans share some of the same values and beliefs, such as team work, dedication, and respect. If we share such values, then don't we also have empathy for one another? Although it may be the wishful thinking of a World Cup fan, it seems possible that this tournament can light a spark that can help ease intercultural conflicts. We must not forget, after all, that we all have common ground, and that is grounds enough to promote the beautiful game's values of friendship and fair play throughout the world.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

At the time of this writing, the 2010 FIFA World Cup has only been in the history books for about nine months. Only time will tell if the “World Cup fever” lasts in South Africa, thus leading to more sustained “social profitability,” both in South Africa and across the African continent. As time passes, more research needs to be done to understand the long-term economic benefits of hosting the World Cup in South Africa, including its effects on GDP and tourism, as well as the impact of newly constructed infrastructure in the developing nation. Of course, more research will also need to be done to determine the extent to which the establishment of third culture has made communication easier, both between the races of the formerly-segregated nation of South Africa and between the various cultures of the world.

Although the 2010 World Cup is in the past, worldwide attention is already beginning to turn to Brazil, host of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. In the future, more research will need to be done to understand the extent to which Brazil can use sport to establish a third culture. Already a rising economy, Brazil may receive the public relations boost it needs to elevate itself into the conversation as a world superpower by hosting a World Cup and Olympics in a two-year span. Furthermore, FIFA recently announced the following two World Cup hosts: Russia in 2018 and Qatar in 2022. Future research should evaluate the extent to which Russia is able to emerge from the shadow of the U.S.S.R. through hosting the World Cup. Similarly, Qatar will be trying to follow the South African example. South Africans showed that being African is synonymous with being world class. Qatar will have a similar mission on behalf of the Middle East. Future research should evaluate the success of these lofty aspirations.

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